

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly newscast

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Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as, an ESL classroom resource



www.alberta.ca

<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

News story #1 New Premier; New Cabinet

Do you keep up with politics in Alberta? How about politics in your home country? This first story is about the new Premier of Alberta and his newest team of cabinet ministers.

Vocabulary

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. This will help you understand the listening better. Match the vocabulary words to the appropriate definitions.

Answers are in the appendix.

Words in the story	Answer	Definitions
1. sworn		a) not chosen by way of election (voters' votes)
2. premier		b) a natural ability to do something well
3. unelected		c) previous; earlier
4. former		d) area of the city or province that someone runs for a political position in
5. talent		e) to have taken a legal or official oath to the government
6. riding		f) a group of people who work very closely with the premier
7. cabinet		g) the leader of the province

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

Minister of Education- The person in charge of the education sector for the province

Minister of Health- The person in charge of the health sector for the province

Listening Activity: Short Answer

Listen and answer the questions below. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. When was Jim Prentice officially made premier?
2. What do Gordon Dirks and Stephan Mandel have in common?
3. What did Gordon Dirks formerly do before he became the Minister of Education?
4. What did Stephan Mandel do before he became the Minister of Health?
5. What ridings will the three men in this story run in?
6. How many people are in the new cabinet?
7. What will Jim Prentice be in charge of?

Discussion:

If you were responsible for education and health in the place you live, what would you change? What would you improve in each of these two areas and what would you keep the same?

News story #2 Respiratory Illness Spreads

Have you heard about the latest virus that has been going around Alberta? The same virus may also be in the USA. This second story is about the spread of a new virus that affects the lungs of children.

Vocabulary

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily. Fill in the blanks with the correct word. *Answers are in the appendix.*

<i>confirm (to support or verify)</i>	<i>respiratory (of the lungs)</i>
<i>lab tests (scientific tests done in a lab)</i>	<i>grapple (struggle to hold onto, or control)</i>
<i>spread (to pass from one to others; to cover widely)</i>	<i>typical (usual, normal)</i>
<i>outbreak (a sudden occurrence of something)</i>	<i>spike (sharp increase)</i>

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

Adding new beds –getting more beds in the hospital for all of the sick children

enterovirus D-68 – the name of the new virus

strain – type or kind of virus

1. Lots of children have been getting sick _____ illnesses in Alberta.
2. A sudden _____ of the virus has caused medical staff and parents to become concerned.
3. There has recently been a _____ in the number of people who have gotten sick.
4. I had to _____ if I had plans or not, so I checked my schedule.
5. This is _____ weather for this time of year... it's totally normal!
6. The zookeepers _____ with the wild animal as they tried to put it in its cage.
7. The _____ of Ebola in Africa is getting very serious.
8. Scientists will have to do many _____ to check what type of virus is making the kids sick.

Listening Activity: How many?

There are a lot of numbers in this story. Fill in the blanks with the correct numbers. *Answers are in the appendix.*

What?	Number
1. How many children have gotten sick with the virus in Alberta so far?	
2. How many sick children are from Calgary?	
3. How many sick children are from Edmonton?	
4. How many sick children are from different parts of Alberta?	
5. Over how many weeks has there been a spike in cases of sick children?	
6. The name of the virus has a number in it. What is that number?	

Discussion Question: How do diseases like this one spread? What can you do to prevent getting such an illness? Why are children always getting sick with flus and colds? What are the benefits of children getting sick with colds and flus?

News story #3 Expensive Snow-Fall

How much do you think Calgary will have to pay to clean up last week's snowstorm? Calgary gets snow every winter, so why do you think it caused so much damage this time? This last news story is about the cost of repairing all of the damage that was caused by the snow last week.

Vocabulary

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily. Match all of the words from the story with their synonyms.

Answers are in the appendix.

Words from the story	Answer	Synonyms
provincial (adj)		a) the cost what you must pay
snowstorm (n)		b) a good guess an approximate amount
bill (n)		c) of the province Alberta government
estimated (v)		d) a serious situation needing immediate attention
damage (n)		e) to deal with directly to pay attention to
emergency (n)		f) blizzard a lot of wind and snow
addressed (v)		h) broken not perfect

Extra Definitions:

deputy director of the Calgary Emergency Management Agency- person responsible for Calgary's emergencies (last-minute, serious problems)

assess – to determine the amount or extent of something

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True and False

Decide whether the statements below are **true (T)** or **false (F)**. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. ____ Calgary is going to have to pay the whole bill for the damage from the snowstorm.
2. ____ 18% of Calgary's trees were damaged in the snowstorm.
3. ____ The bill of the clean-up is going to come to more than 4 million dollars.
4. ____ Not all of the damaged trees have been addressed yet.
5. ____ Tom Sampson is the deputy director of the Calgary Emergency Management Agency
6. ____ The clean-up should be done by the end of October.

Retell: Try to retell this story in your own words. Think of: What happens? Who is involved? What are the details (costs, damages, dates, etc.)?

Language Focus: Subject and Possessive Pronouns

We use pronouns to take the place of a noun. Today we will look at two types of pronouns. In order to use a pronoun, you must mention the noun first, so it becomes clear what or whom the pronoun is referring to.

1. **Subject Pronoun:** These are used when the pronoun is the subject of a sentence.

- *I, you, he, she, it, we, you, they.*

E.g. Jim Prentice is working hard to clean up the city. **He** is trying hard to clean **it** up.

“He” refers to Jim Prentice and “it” refers to the city and these pronouns can only be used because the original nouns (Jim Prentice and the city) have been mentioned.

2. **Possessive Pronoun:** These are used to link ownership to someone or something.

- *Mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs, ours.*

E.g. Jack knows a lot about the damaged trees and so, the mayor asked **him** about it.

“Him” refers to Jack. We know this because Jack is the only male mentioned previously.

Here are some examples taken from this week’s stories. Identify these three things:

- a) The pronoun
- b) If it is a subject or possessive pronoun
- c) The noun, which the pronoun is referring to.

1. There were some big surprises as Alberta’s new premier presented his new cabinet.

- a)
- b)
- c)

2. Jim Prentice was sworn Monday afternoon as Alberta’s 16th premier. His team includes two unelected people.

- a)
- b)
- c)

3. Tom Sampson is asking the province for help. He says there are still 34-hundred emergency tree calls that must be addressed.

- a)
- b)
- c)

Now you try to write some statements, which either have a subject or possessive pronoun. Don’t forget to mention the noun before using the pronoun!

Transcripts of Weekly news stories

	SEPTEMBER 19 TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, I'm Rosa Marchitelli. You're listening to Learning English with CBC for the week of September 19 th .	0:00
Story 1	There were some big surprises as Alberta's new premier presented his new cabinet. Jim Prentice was sworn in Monday afternoon as Alberta's 16th premier. His team includes two unelected people. Gordon Dirks -- a former chair of the Calgary Board of Education -- is now the Minister of Education. And former Edmonton Mayor Stephen Mandel is the new Minister of Health. Prentice says it's all about finding new talent. No information yet on which ridings Mandel, Dirks or even Prentice will run in. The new cabinet includes 20 people -- with Prentice, himself, taking on the roles of Aboriginal and international relations.	0:12
Story 2	Alberta health officials have confirmed that a respiratory illness called enterovirus D-68 has made at least 18 children ill in the province. Lab tests Monday confirmed 10 cases in Calgary, five in Edmonton and three in central and northern Alberta. While respiratory problems are common at this time of year these cases come as doctors in the U.S. grapple with the spread of enterovirus D-68, which has been sending more children to hospital in that country than a typical virus. The Alberta Children's Hospital in Calgary has seen a spike in the number of children admitted for respiratory problems in the past several weeks and is adding new beds to keep up with demand. Alberta health officials can't say if this is the same D-68 strain causing outbreaks in the U.S. and are working with Canada's national lab to find answers.	1:04
Story 3	The City of Calgary will ask for provincial help to cover the millions of dollars it will cost to deal with problems caused by last week's snowstorm. The city has already spent more than eight-million dollars and the bill is only expected to increase. It's estimated that 80 per cent of the city's trees were damaged by last week's snowstorms. The deputy director of the Calgary Emergency Management Agency says the City's clean-up costs are only going higher -- so Tom Sampson is asking the province for help. He says there are still 34-hundred emergency tree calls that must be addressed. Sampson hopes the immediate clean-up will be done by the end of October but addressing the damage to trees could take up to a year.	2:13

Answer keys

News story 1

Vocabulary:

Words in the story	Answer	Definitions
1. sworn	e	a) not chosen by way of election (voters' votes)
2. premier	g	b) a natural ability to do something well
3. unelected	a	c) previous; earlier
4. former	c	d) area of the city or province that someone runs for a political position in
5. talent	b	e) to have taken a legal or official oath to the government
6. riding	d	f) a group of people who work very closely with the premier
7. cabinet	f	g) the leader of the province

Listening Activity: Short Answer. Listen and answer the questions below. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. When was Jim Prentice officially made premier? **He was sworn in on Monday afternoon**
2. What do Gordon Dirks and Stephan Mandel have in common? **They are both unelected cabinet ministers.**
3. What did Gordon Dirks formerly do before he became the Minister of Education? **He was a former chair of the Calgary Board of Education.**
4. What did Stephan Mandel do before he became the Minister of Health? **He is the former mayor of Edmonton.**
5. What ridings will the three men in this story run in? **They are still unsure about which ridings they will run in.**
6. How many people are in the new cabinet? **20**
7. What will Jim Prentice be in charge of? **Aboriginal and international relations**

News story 2

Vocabulary:

1. Lots of children have been getting sick with **respiratory** illnesses in Alberta.
2. A sudden **outbreak** of the virus has caused medical staff and parents to become concerned.
3. There has recently been a **spike** in the number of people who have gotten sick.
4. I had to **confirm** if I had plans, or not, so I checked my schedule.
5. This is **typical** weather for this time of year... it's totally normal!
6. The zoo keepers **grappled** with the wild animal as they tried to make put it in its cage.

7. The **spread** of Ebola in Africa is getting very serious.
8. Scientists will have to do many **lab tests** to check what type of virus is making the kids sick.

Listening:

What?	Number
1. How many children have gotten sick with the virus in Alberta so far?	18
2. How many sick children are from Calgary?	10
3. How many sick children are from Edmonton?	5
4. How many sick children are from different parts of Alberta?	3
5. Over how many weeks has there been a spike in cases of sick children?	Several weeks
6. The name of the virus has a number in it. What is that number?	68 (D-68)

News story 3

Vocabulary:

Words from the story	Answer	Synonyms
Provincial (adj)	c	a) the cost what you must pay
Snowstorm (n)	f	b) a good guess an approximate amount
bill (n)	a	c) of the province Alberta government
estimated (v)	b	d) a serious situation needing immediate attention
damage (n)	h	e) to deal with directly to pay attention to
emergency (n)	d	f) blizzard a lot of wind and snow
addressed (v)	f	i) broken not perfect

Listening:

Listening Activity: True and False

Decide whether the statements below are **true (T)** or **false (F)**. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. **F** Calgary is going to have to pay the whole bill for the damage from the snowstorm.
2. **F** 18% of Calgary's trees were damaged in the snowstorm.
3. **T** The bill of the clean-up is going to come to more than 4 million dollars.
4. **T** Not all of the damaged trees have been addressed yet.

5. T Tom Sampson is the deputy director of the Calgary Emergency Management Agency
6. F The clean-up should be done by the end of October.

Language focus: Subject Pronouns and Possessive Pronouns

1. There were some big surprises as Alberta's new premier presented his new cabinet.
a) his
b) Possessive pronoun
c) Alberta's new premier
2. Jim Prentice was sworn Monday afternoon as Alberta's 16th premier. His team includes two unelected people.
a) his
b) Possessive pronoun
c) Jim Prentice
3. Tom Sampson is asking the province for help. He says there are still 34-hundred emergency tree calls that must be addressed.
a) He
b) Subject pronoun
c) Tom Sampson